

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 IO-10

SAM-01 /087 W

----- 009205

O R 041030Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3220

INFO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

CINCPAC HONOLULU

USDEL JEC PARIS

UNCLAS SAIGON 2358

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP VS CB

SUBJECT: PRESS DISTORTION

OF EPISODE DURING RECENT CONGRESS-

IONAL VISIT

1. WE HAVE NOTED IN THE MARCH 3 ISSUE OF THE PACIFIC STRAS AND STRIPES A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF FLAGRANT JOURNALISTIC DISTORTION OF THE FACTS IN THIS CASE BY THE AP. ON PAGE 7 THERE APPEARS A LARGE PHOTOGRAPH OF REPRESENTATIVES FENWICK AND ABZUG FACING A VIETNAMESE NATIONAL POLICEMAN WITH THE FOLLOWING CAPTION UNDER THE HEADLINE "SAIGON COP STOPS LAWMAKERS":

QTE: A NATIONAL POLICEMAN STOPS REQS. MILLICENT FENWICK, R-N. J. (NO HAT) AND BELLA ABZUG, D-N.Y., AS THEY TRY TO ENTER THE INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING COMMISSION HEADQUARTERS IN SAIGON. THE POLICEMAN TOLD THEM HE HAD ORDERS NOT TO LET ANYONE ON ON THE COMPOUND. EIGHT LEGISLATORS ARE ON A FACT-FINDING MISSION TO ASSESS PRESIDENT FORD'S REQUEST FOR \$300 MILLION

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IN SUPPLEMENTAL MILITARY AID TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERN-

MENT. (AP) UNQTE

2. THE FACTS OF THIS EPISODE ARE:

- A. REPRESENTATIVE ABZUG AFTER HAVING IGNORED AN OFFER BY THE EMBASSY TO ARRANGE FOR HER TO MEET WITH THE ICCS ON ABOUT AN HOUR'S NOTICE PROCEEDED (ACCOMPANIED BY REPRESENTATIVES FRASER AND FENWICK AS WELL AS VIETNAMESE DISSIDENTS MADAME NGO BA THANH AND FATHER CHAN TIN) AT ABOUT 0930 HOURS ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, DIRECT TO ICCS HEADQUARTERS IN SAIGON WITHOUT ANY ADVANCE NOTIFICATION TO THE ICCS SECRETARIAT OR ANY DELEGATION.
- B. ON ARRIVAL AT THE ICCS THE GROUP FOLLOWED BY A CONSIDERABLE PRESS CONTINGENT, OBVIOUSLY INCLUDING THE AP, NATURALLY FOUND EVERYONE IN IGNORANCE AND ON ONE READY TO RECEIVE THEM.
- C. NEVERTHELESS, AFTER A FEW MOMENTS OF CONFUSION THE GROUP WAS ADMITTED INTO THE ICCS COMPOUND IN WHAT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES CAN ONLY BE CALLED EXTRAORDINARY SPEED.
- D. INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR SAMIL MOST KINDLY AGREED TO RECEIVE THE AMERICANS ON VERY SHORT NOTICE AND PROCEEDED TO GIVE THEM A BRIEFING ON THE ICCS.
- E. THE HUNGARIANS CHAIRMAN OF THE MONTH DID NOT RECEIVE THE GROUP BUT DID SEND HIS STAFF AIDE TO ACCEPT FROM REPRESENTATIVE ABZUG A PETITION PREPARED BY MADAME NGO BAN THANH AND FATHER CHAN TIN.
- F. SHORTLY AFTER ALL THESE THEATRICAL HAPPENINGS SENATOR BARTLETT MET QUIETLY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH BOTH THE HUNGARIAN AND IRANIAN DELEGATIONS THROUGH ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY THE EMBASSY AT THE SENATOR'S REQUEST.

3. AS INDICATED IN PARAGRAPH 1 ABOVE THIS AFFAIR IS NOW REPRESENTED BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS AS THE VIETNAMESE NATIONAL POLICE STOPPING AMERICAN MEMBERS OF CONGRESS FROM SEEING THE ICCS IN SAIGON. BELIEVE THE ABOVE SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK. IT MAY ALSO BE USEFUL TO PASS THIS REPORT ON TO REPRESENTATIVE FENWICK.

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